

Explo Systems faced scrutiny before evacuation in northwest La.

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The explosives recycling company that recently caused the evacuation of a northwestern Louisiana town has come under scrutiny for explosions and its handling of dangerous materials before—and it was so far behind on its rent that the Louisiana National Guard refused to lease it more space. Explo Systems Inc. was cited for safety violations by the federal government in 2007 for its use of old Army explosives in mining operations in West Virginia, where a blast with "outdated deteriorated military ordnance" injured one worker and exposed others to toxins. And the company had fallen hundreds of thousands of dollars behind on its rent at a Louisiana National Guard base even as it processed an Army contract to demilitarize hundreds of thousands of propelling charges used for artillery. The company's most recent problems began with an explosion in October at a Louisiana facility near the small town of Doyline. In late November Doyline's 800 residents were put under a voluntary evacuation order that ended Friday. Authorities investigating the blast found an estimated 6 million pounds of a propellant called M6—used for artillery rounds—haphazardly stored. Some boxes were stacked in buildings, some were packed into long corridors that connect the buildings and still more were found stashed outside. Some of the containers were spilling open. The company, which has not yet responded to requests for comment from the media, is now under a criminal investigation for its storage of the materials, which are being secured. The full story is [here](#).